

Para Swimming Coach Certification Program (PSCC)

To enroll in any course, you must first meet certain prerequisites. Each course includes an assessment, and, upon completion, you may receive a certificate of completion or certification. Courses need to be taken according to their numerical order. Before moving on to an advanced course, you must successfully pass the previous one and meet its experience requirements or have equivalent qualifications.

Standard Prerequisites:

- Submit an up-to-date professional resume annually to the Education Manager.
 - Participate in the Virtual Para Information Session: The Introduction & Orientation to Para Swimming (1.25 hours), offered quarterly as either a virtual or in-person clinic. Attendance is required for each quadrennial cycle to ensure familiarity with all relevant aspects, including WPS rule interpretations and technical meeting information for para-only swim meets.
 - Maintain a current USA Swimming annual coach membership card in good standing each year to preserve active course certification status. Coaches are responsible for submitting an updated copy of their membership card annually to the Education Manager.
 - Hold valid certifications in CPR, AED, and First Aid.
 - Complete Safe Sport Training (complimentary, annually).
 - Obtain a Green Light Clear NCSI Background Check.
 - Fulfill any educational coursework required by USA Swimming or U.S. Paralympics Swimming to maintain current membership status.
 - Complete Coach Experiential Learning prior to beginning the program.
 - Satisfy experiential requirements at each level of the program.
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PSCC Level 1 Certification Certificate Course.

This program is available online as a virtual course. Participants are required to complete a workbook before attending the virtual session, where interactive discussions and experiential learning will be integrated with the workbook activities. At least four (4) courses are scheduled annually, either as virtual or in-person sessions.

Level 1 introduces governance and essential knowledge for para swimming, designed for foundational and emerging level para swimmers. It equips coaches for para-specific swim meets and camps through a 3.5-hour virtual class. To succeed, participants must finish the pre-course workbook, actively participate in discussions during the session, and pass a post-course assessment.

Experiential learning requirement: A minimum of one year's experience as a lead coach in a competitive swimming program for a full annual season plan and participated with swimmers as a coach on the deck for various team and meet experiences. Coaches may have previously worked with, currently work with, or plan to work with swimmers—regardless of disability status—at foundational, emerging, national, or higher levels.

PSCC Level 2 Certification Certificate Course.

This program combines virtual instruction with in-person experiential coursework as a hybrid format. Participants must complete a workbook before the virtual session. During the virtual session, discussions and engagement activities will incorporate the workbook and hands-on experiences, with expanded focus on pool deck skills. Each year, at least two (2) courses are offered as either virtual or in-person sessions.

The curriculum covers knowledge for para swimming, aimed at emerging to national level para swimmers. It prepares coaches for para-specific swim meets and camps with a 3-hour virtual course and at least two (2) hours of in-person experience at a camp, clinic, or para only meet where the coach engages in various sport class training modifications and Level 2 sport science/race analysis data collection.

Participants must complete a workbook beforehand, join discussions during the session, and pass a post-course assessment.

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Experiential learning requirement: Coaches at this Level are currently and consistently coaching with an organized swimming program through several full winter/summer seasons and previously, currently, or potentially in the future coaching a swimmer with a disability. Coaches at this level must have attended multiple para only swim meets as a coach, planned a seasonal training program plan for one or more athletes and been the coach of record for an athlete to the emerging level, national level or beyond.

PSCC Level 3 Certification Certificate Course.

This course is offered exclusively as an in-person certificate course. Prior to attending the virtual session, participants must complete a workbook. The virtual portion will consist of interactive activities and discussions utilizing both the workbook and experiential learning, which further develop specific competencies essential for representation on international platforms. At least one (1) in-person course is scheduled annually within each year of the quadrennial cycle.

This curriculum constitutes a national-level program designed to prepare elite coaches with international-caliber expertise, focused on delivering high-quality athlete development on the global stage. Entry into this level is by invitation or selection. The program enables candidates to cultivate advanced practical coaching abilities, strengthen their performance planning and analysis skills pertinent to camps, travel, and competition environments, and acquire organizational techniques through active engagement and collaboration. The full course requires approximately five hours, which includes completion of assessments and participation in experiential learning activities.

Experiential Learning: Candidates should currently be coaching within an organized swimming program and either have experience coaching athletes with disabilities or intend to do so in the future, at levels ranging from emerging to national and beyond. In addition, Coaches at this level are those that have demonstrated the ability to serve as a complete coach for the overall growth and development of athletes. They are expected to demonstrate comprehensive proficiency in fostering team growth and development. They should possess exceptional adaptability and robust problem-solving abilities, ensuring optimal outcomes for Team USA in pursuit of its performance objectives.

PSCC CEU Recertification & Continuing Education Requirements

A PSCC certification remains valid for four (4) years. Recertification is essential to ensure that coaches continue to advance their professional development and remain current with the evolving knowledge in the para-swimming field.

To retain a Para Swimming Coach Certification, coaches are required to complete all recertification procedures by their designated deadline. The recertification process includes fulfilling all specified requirements and submitting a complete recertification application. For comprehensive details regarding the recertification process, please refer to the designated webpage (insert webpage link).

Recertification Requirements:

- Earn 8 CEU/PDU credits: 6 must be para-specific, and 2 in general swimming areas.
- Fulfill all course pre-requisites for your recertification level.
- If recertification lapses, retake the Level and complete all experiential learning.
- USPS offers at least 6 para-swimming CEU opportunities every 4 years, available online or in-person.
- Submit non-USPS CEUs for approval.
- CEU requirements are prorated by certification date. For instance, certification in year two of a quad means only 6 CEUs are needed (4.5 para-specific, 1.5 general).
- Example: One CEU is earned for attending an Introduction & Orientation Virtual Session; two CEUs for a Regional In-person Session with athlete clinic.
- All USPS CEU events are listed on the team website under the Coach tab.